



Literary Enigma

The International Journal of English Language, Literature and Culture
(Peer-reviewed and Indexed)

Vol. 1, Special Issue: 6

June 2025

Article No 1

1. Department of English,
Deshabandhu
Mahavidyalaya
Chittaranjan, Kazi
Nazrul University
Asansol, Paschim
Bardhaman WB, India

Page No: 1-6



Beyond The Conventions of Pedagogy: A New Film with A New Subject a Critical Analysis of *Taare Zameen Par*

Prof. Kingshuk Ray¹

Abstract

Tare Zameen Par is a 2007 Indian Hindi-language drama film, which tells the story of Ishan Awasthi, an 8-year-old historic baby stuffed with joy and creativeness is having a difficult time with his life. The film beautifully showed how a teacher can double up as the parent and look after a student like their own child. It wants to highlight children's syndromes and find ways to cope with it. This movie explores pedagogy for children's education that comprises different socio and cultural viewpoint regarding education and success, traditional teaching system, parenting and different personality factors of children that affected their learning process. The study found the faulty and hackneyed teaching system; deformed parenting a tendency to satisfy parents enthusiasm to see their children as toppers without considering children's cognitive flourish; and different socio- cultural conditions. The boy suffers from Dyslexia, their writings characterized by spelling errors, letter order errors, the writing speed is slow, the handwriting poor, with irregularly formed letters; and inappropriate use of words is common. Dyslexia people often have a natural flair for one or more of the arts (Such as music, dance, drawing, or acting). It has been suggested that, in remedial training, children with learning disorders be encouraged to developed such hidden talents to full capacity, rather than be subjected to the usual overemphasize on the correction of the disturbed coded symbol operations.

Keywords: Tare zameen par, pedagogy, Dyslexia, Art.

This work is licensed under [Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) This journal and its contents may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

Beyond The Conventions of Pedagogy: A New Film with A New Subject a Critical Analysis of *Taare Zameen Par*

Introduction

Pedagogy is about learning, teaching and development, influenced by cultural and social values. Pedagogy is underpinned by a strong theoretical and practical base. We know that children learn best when they are active and busy. They also learn and develop at different rates personally to themselves. For young children to take part in and enjoy their world, they need to gain a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills. If we believe that a young child's concern is to be an active busy learner, trying to make sense of the world around them in order to take part and enjoy it, we can say they are learning well of the time all their experiences. One of our responsibilities as practitioners who work with children is to reflect on our own thinking and consider how it impacts on children's learning and experiences. Pedagogy is the method and practice of learning teaching that reflects "the aims of education and the ways in which such goals may be achieved" add mirrors, different social, political, cultural contexts from which they emerged", and thus various greatly in style pioneers, such as Maria Montessori, Jean Piaget and Paulo Freire pushed the science of learning into the psychological sphere. Children according to Margaret Mead must be taught how to think not work to think as in the film it is turned "*Tu dhoop hai... Tu hai nadi... Bahe chal kahin, urr chl kahin, Dil khush Jahan, Teri to manzil hai wahi*" traditional pedagogy does not allow children to be open and "focus more on the transmission of the knowledge of more or less absolute truths", rather than teach them "to think for themselves and draw their own conclusion".

However, the another key fault in the traditional pedagogy as focused in the film, according to Brown H.D "often leads learner to shut off their attempts at communication". Ishaan had to face a constant confutation from his teachers and family of his poor performance. Education through generally is "the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits", is unfortunately treated in many countries including India as "a positional good" i.e, an untiring competition to provide a better education or an aggressive consideration of obtaining a good grade or academic certificates as a yardstick to get a prestigious job in the competitive world of the 21st century. However, this approach may sometimes result in unfair treatment even ensure some traumatic experiences to some students, especially to those who cannot keep pace with the race, and to some individuals who possess some special potentials, other than the trite value of talents. Even for the societal gluttony of competition and parents, ambition some lives can be lost psychologically and physically forever. The film *Taare Zameen Par* portrays some cruelty existing in our society regarding children's education where a young learner, Ishaan Nandkishore Awasthi (a child of a 8-9 years) tremendously suffers psychologically for inappropriate pedagogy and unfortunate parenting. Though Ishaan is an individual, his learning experience can be generalized to all the unprivileged but special children whose journey of learning is affected by the traditional teaching system and different social and cultural factors. The society portrayed in the film as a typical society of today's world where the concept of success is meant to become the toppers and the rankers by having prestigious professions, and education is the apparatus to execute that goal. The motto of education is defined as to prepare children for life's race, to complete to succeed, to make a future in the crazy world. To achieve that goal, order, discipline, and hard work are considered as the foundation of complete education as well as three pillars of success, and the traditional pedagogy as a catalyst for the achievement. So, competition starts from the very childhood i.e. from the very beginning of their education life. Besides, parents being concerned about children's future becomes so much enthusiastic about their children's education that obtaining less than 95.5% marks becomes blasphemy. Such egoistic desire and belief of success, achievement and failure of parents and their "immediate replacement of a way to be" obscure the ability for the child to develop their way because then

the main battle becomes that their child is not what they thought it would be. The same battle has been observed in the relationship between Ishaan and his father and Kishore Awasthi the successful executive to whom the purpose of education was to grow worthily for the competitive world, and so he expected his sons to become brilliant enough to be doctors, engineers or have MBA. The nature and purpose of such enthusiasm regarding his children's future seems surprisingly to satisfy his own ambitions, to maintain superior positions in the society, and to remove his lifelong burdens.

However, education, though can be without schooling but from the world itself i.e. from nature, human experiences, actions and so on, formal education i.e. learning to read and write that needs to be taught are usually provided in schools. Unfortunately schooling sometimes can be without education and even can ruin learners, lives if the pedagogy is faulty. In fact, children's pedagogy cannot be the same as using their imagination, "observing and copying, doing things, watching and listening", through interesting activities like songs, rhymes and games and by taking an active role in the learning process, performing experiments, making observations, and interacting with the world around them. However, in the film Ishaan, who possessed special talents of art, yet unrecognized was suffering from a psychological disorder dyslexia for which he was facing problems in identifying the letters and conceptualizing words. He finds all subjects difficult which is the reason he has a loss of interest in studies. His reading writing and listening skills are very poor. He faces academic difficulties for a long time. For instance, when his art teacher checks his notebook, he noticed mistakes with similar letters. "b or d" or imagining. He also observed the mixes up similarly spelt words like "T-O-P becomes P-O-T" and S-O-I-L-E-D becomes S-O-L-I-D. Surprisingly, none of the parents and typical teachers tried to identify the patterns of mistakes Ishaan frequently did, though indeed showing his mistakes and encouraging him to correct himself and repeating and praising to build confidence and to overcome mistakes would smoothen the learning process and help him succeed.

Another key fault in the traditional pedagogy, as focused in the film, is to provide "too much negative cognitive feedback, a barrage of interruptions, corrections and overt attention to malformations", the film started with teachers' negative expressions regarding Ishaan's obtaining poor marks in the exam. Some other moving scenes that portrayed Ishaan's suffering humiliation where physical teacher shouting "Out! Out! shoe polish nahin hai". English teacher's reaction "Get out! Get out of my class!" "Shameless boy!" shame of being ridiculed and belittled by his teachers, classmates and others surrounding him. His mother blaming him for leaving her job. His father's negligence towards his capability, comparing of two brothers for making him feel failure, and finally sending him to a boarding school as punishment. On the very day in the boarding school Tiwari sir made Ishaan feel inferior by comparing him with other students of his age; the art teacher punished him for being inattentive and threatened him to give more punishment if he would not draw proper shapes; this sort of demeaning and inauspicious attitude affected his inner impulse so acutely that his self-confidence was completely shattered and he started to feel indifferent to any reactions and sank into such a state of fear and depression that he was about to lose his life.

On the contrary, the new teacher's role towards Ishaan was exemplary for all the teachers and parents concerned with children's education. His effective affirmation and inspiration to Ishaan praising him for his powerful imagination, artistic ability, and creative work to make him feel good to himself; encouraging him by giving examples of some successful person like Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Alva Edison etc., experienced the same like him at the early age; and finally drawing Ishaan's picture in the art competition to make him feel worthy received his self-esteem to go ahead. Moreover, he started to use different remedial techniques to help him make progress. He started to provide extra tutoring; teach bookish materials in different techniques; involving him in real life activities,

teaching in playful and practical manner using motivating teaching tools children usually feel interesting in, providing him assurance that he can do it, approaching his good performance so that he can overcome frustration for his inability to perform, and making him feel that he is making progress. Both parents and teachers should acknowledge the area of interest of the children and provide them proper guidance by applying appropriate teaching strategies instead of complaining one with another because that may create many psychological problems for the children, affect their self-esteem and thus cause failure in life.

Finally, good parenting is the root of a child's overall development and contributes essentially to build up a child's future. Parents should encourage children to do their best, but should not pressure them by setting goals too high (the child as a learner too), and force their ambitions onto the immature shoulders of their children unbearable to them. They should assure their children, according to Mr. Nikumbh, that whenever they (children) face any problems or slips, they (parents) are there for them ("*main hoon na*"). They should not make children realize as if they are burdens. Instead, parents should give quality time to help their children learn, and change their mindset that providing only financial support to their children is the only responsibility to be performed. Moreover, parents active and meaningful involvement with the learning process i.e. providing an enjoyable learning environment at home with fun activities, placing learning in context, and providing facilitating feedback to their mistakes help them succeed.

Analysis

Tare Zameen Par, is a Bollywood movie which basically story of 8–9-year boy. He is suffering from psychological "dyslexia". No one around him can recognize him that he is a slow learner. He is suffering from psychological "dyslexia". No one around him can recognize him that he is a slow learner. All teachers and specially his father behave him very bad by giving him punishment. He has the problem to identifying the words and therefore he cannot read the write proper right properly. After several complain from the school and building, his frustrated father decides to send him boarding school to 'be disciplined'. There he sings into a state of fear and depression. But his internal world is rich with wonders that he is an unable to convey to others, magical lands filled with colours and animated animals. He is an artist whose talent is unrecognized. At boarding school, a new art teacher gets worried to see the condition of the boy. After investigating, he comes to know the actual reason and attempts to make him brilliant. He teaches him using different techniques which he can understand. In a very short interval, the kid learner everything even regarding and writing, and in the ending of year, he gets his grade in his classes.

Let's make one thing clear that *Tare Zameen Par* is not one of those films that merely entertains, but also lightens. It is one film that makes you peep into child's mind and how some parents, in their desire to make their children stronger academically, forget that there's also a hidden talent that needs to be nourished and encouraged. A film can change the thinking, attitudes, behaviour and practice of people much faster than any other technique. It is also about the teaching technique of the teacher in our educational system that needs to be improved. The film starts with the scene of Ishaan in which he was showed in capturing the fish with different style. Actually, he is unable to read and write properly. The words seem to him like dancing. He gets furious at a bit little thing. His parents receive complains from building and from school daily. And after receiving a particularly poor academic report, so his parents sent him boarding school. The separation of son and mother. There he sinks into a state of fear and depression, despite of befriended by Rajan who is one of the top students in his class. His interest in the study is the same as before. He is punished by an art teacher on the very first day for being not attentive. Ishaan's situation changes when a new art teacher Ram Shankar Nikumbh joins the school's faculty. Nikumbh's teaching style is markedly different from that of his strict predecessor and he quickly observes that Ishaan is unhappy and contributes little to class

activities. He reviews Ishaan's work and concludes that his academic short comings are indicative of "Dyslexia". On his day off, Nikumbh visits Ishaan's parents that Ishaan is the bright child who process information differently from other children in his class, but Ishaan's father is suspicious that the explanation is simply an excuse for his son's poor performances. Nikumbh demands that he reads some Japanese text on a box and berates him when he cannot give him a glimpse into Ishaan's experience of his school. Nikumbh describes "Dyslexia" to them and explains that it that he can provide extra tutoring that will help Ishaan, highlighting the boy's artistic ability evident in his many paintings and other creative works.

Towards the end of the school year Nikumbh organize an art fair for the staff and students. The competition is judged by artist 'Lalita Lajmi'. Ishaan with his stinkingly creative style, is declared the winner and Nikumbh, who paints Ishaan's portrait, the runner up. The principal announces that Nikumbh has been hired as the school's permanent art teacher. When Ishaan's parents meet his teacher on the last day of school they are left speechless by the transformation they see in him. Overcome with emotion Ishaan's father thanks Nikumbh. As Ishaan is getting into the car with his parents for summer with vacation, he turns around and runs towards Nikumbh. The film ends with a freeze frame shot of Nikumbh tossing Ishaan into the air.

The role of the traditional teachers shown in an eye opener to our society. We should move away with it. In afraid of getting punishment students cram their lesson without cleaning their concepts. But on the other hand, the role of a new art teacher is quite different. All teachers believe that the all students have same ability in a class and teaching one student is same for all therefore whatever one student learns in the class should be learnt by the equally well. The teachers' attitude towards students should be friendly and nonthreatening, therefore the students are able to follow the instruction and share their problems easily.

Conclusion

To conclude, the film *Taare Zameen Par* is an eye-opener to the traditional teaching system, home culture, and to the society simultaneously, as it mirrors the consequence of hackneyed pedagogy, insensible parenting, and society's typical vision of education and success for children's education, and hope for changes in societal, familial and institutional perspectives and practices regarding the matter, the film suggests some significant amendment to the traditional pedagogy and typical parenting for children's education e.g, appreciating children's individual talents, and helping them thrive instead of sticking children with arrows of parents ambitions; providing children an enjoyable and stress free learning environment by showing friendly and unthreatening attitude towards them, encouraging their self-esteem; applying appropriate teaching strategies making learning fun by using interesting teaching tools and ensuring their active participation in learning; and finally, parents giving quality time to their children and being a source of inspiration and trust with a hope for creating a fear-free comfortable world to help their potentialities flourish.

Works Cited

- 1) Brown, H. D. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. 3rd ed., Prentice Hall, 1994.
- 2) "Education." Wikipedia, n.d., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education>. Accessed 2 Mar. 2019.
- 3) Margaret Mead Quotes. Goodreads, <https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/61107.Margaret.Mead>. Accessed 20 Mar. 2019.
- 4) Peel, E. "Pedagogy." Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/science/pedagogy>. Accessed 8 Mar. 2019.
- 5) Bloggee. "Analysis of Movie Taare Zameen Par." *My Notes Literature*, 2015, <http://mynoteslitarature.blogspot.com/2015/02/analysis-of-movie-taare-zameen-par.html>.